

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

1. (Canceled)
2. (Previously presented) A method for manufacturing a semiconductor device comprising the step of:  
forming an insulating film comprising silicon nitride over a semiconductor by sputtering in an atmosphere comprising nitrogen at 75 volume % or more.
3. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 2 wherein the sputtering is performed by an RF sputtering method.
4. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 2 wherein the semiconductor device is incorporated into an active matrix display device.
5. (Previously presented) A method for manufacturing a semiconductor device comprising the step of:  
forming an insulating film comprising silicon nitride over a semiconductor by sputtering in an atmosphere comprising nitrogen at 75 volume % or more and argon at 25 volume % or less.
6. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 5 wherein the sputtering is performed by an RF sputtering method.
7. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 5 wherein the semiconductor device is incorporated into an active matrix display device.
8. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 5 wherein the atmosphere

further comprises a halogen compound gas at 0.2 to 20 volume %.

9. (Previously presented) A method for manufacturing a semiconductor device comprising the steps of:

forming an insulating film comprising silicon nitride over a semiconductor by sputtering in an atmosphere comprising nitrogen at 75 volume % or more; and

forming an electrode comprising aluminum over the insulating film.

10. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 9 wherein the sputtering is performed by an RF sputtering method.

11. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 9 wherein the semiconductor device is incorporated into an active matrix display device.

12. (Previously presented) A method for manufacturing a semiconductor device comprising the steps of:

forming an insulating film comprising silicon nitride over a semiconductor by sputtering in an atmosphere comprising nitrogen at 75 volume % or more and argon at 25 volume % or less; and

forming an electrode comprising aluminum over the insulating film.

13. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 12 wherein the sputtering is performed by an RF sputtering method.

14. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 12 wherein the semiconductor device is incorporated into an active matrix display device.

15. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 12 wherein the atmosphere further comprises a halogen compound gas at 0.2 to 20 volume %.

16. (Previously presented) A method for manufacturing a semiconductor device

comprising the step of:

forming a transistor; and

forming an insulating film comprising silicon nitride over the transistor by sputtering in an atmosphere comprising nitrogen at 75 volume % or more.

17. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 16 wherein the sputtering is performed by an RF sputtering method.

18. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 16 wherein the semiconductor device is incorporated into an active matrix display device.

19. (Currently Amended) A method for manufacturing a semiconductor device comprising the steps ~~step~~ of:  
forming a transistor; and  
forming an insulating film comprising silicon nitride over the transistor by sputtering in an atmosphere comprising nitrogen at 75 volume % or more and argon at 25 volume % or less.

20. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 19 wherein the sputtering is performed by an RF sputtering method.

21. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 19 wherein the semiconductor device is incorporated into an active matrix display device.

22. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 19 wherein the atmosphere further comprises a halogen compound gas at 0.2 to 20 volume %.

23. (New) A method according to claim 8, wherein the halogen compound gas is selected from the group consisting of NF<sub>3</sub>, N<sub>2</sub>F<sub>4</sub>, HF, chloro-fluoro carbon, F<sub>2</sub>, CCl<sub>4</sub>, Cl<sub>2</sub> and HCl.

24. (New) A method according to claim 15, wherein the halogen compound gas is selected from the group consisting of  $\text{NF}_3$ ,  $\text{N}_2\text{F}_4$ , HF, chloro-fluoro carbon,  $\text{F}_2$ ,  $\text{CCl}_4$ ,  $\text{Cl}_2$  and HCl.

25. (New) A method according to claim 22, wherein the halogen compound gas is selected from the group consisting of  $\text{NF}_3$ ,  $\text{N}_2\text{F}_4$ , HF, chloro-fluoro carbon,  $\text{F}_2$ ,  $\text{CCl}_4$ ,  $\text{Cl}_2$  and HCl.